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Air India may send 5000 employees on compulsory leave

BY INDJOURNALS BUREAU JULY 16, 2020

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Unions to challenge in court

Mumbai:

While the Narendra Modi government is eager to sell Air India, the AI has now decided to reduce its burden of salary, perks by reducing the existing staff. In a move meant to reduce its number of employees, the board of Directors of Air India has allowed the airline's Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) to recommend that a non-performing staff member be compulsorily sent on leave without pay for a period of up to five years.

As per the reliable sources, AI may send at least 5,000 employees on compulsory leave without pay which is indirectly equal to sacking them. Employees union has warned to challenge this move in the court.

" This move will witness job-loss for at least 5,000 employees. Most of them may be those who are nearing retirement," a highly placed employee in AI told Indjournals.

The move comes at a time when the government is attempting to sell off the airline, a process which has been delayed because of the outbreak of coronavirus.

" After 1995, there was no recruitment of permanent employee. AI has around 13,000 permanent employees in the country. The last batch of employees recruited in 1995 is now around 48 years of their age. Management may send on leaves to those who are in the age group of 52 to 55. In this way they will be indirectly retired or sacked from duty," an official said.

Air India CMD Rajiv Bansal can now send employees on leave without pay "for six months or for a period of two years extendable up to five years," an official order said on Tuesday. Employees will be assessed by a board in the following categories: Suitability, efficiency, competence, quality of performance, health of the employee, instance of non-availability of the employee for duty in the past as a result of ill health or otherwise.

BJP leaders & Birla on AI Management

BJP leaders D. Purandeswari and Dr.Syed Zafar Islam are independent directors and members of Board of Directors which gave power to

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CMD Bansal to send employees on compulsory leave. Purandeswari is daughter of veteran film icon and politician N.T. Ramarao. She was also Minister of State during UPA government between 2009-14. After this she joined BJP but lost Lok Sabha election in 2014. She has been now accommodated by BJP as an independent director. Dr. Islam is BJP spokesperson and also a former Managing Director of Deutsche Bank.

Well known businessman Kumar Mangalam Birla is also an independent director of AI. Apart from them Dr. Ravindra Kumar Tyagi is also an independent director. Joint Secretaries Vimalendra Patwardhan and Satyendra Kumar Mishra along with Vinod Hejmadi, Director Finance are members of this board.

Will challenge in Court- Union

The Employees unions are strongly against this move. They are having series of meetings on this issue.

" Sending employees on long leave without pay is against the law. There is no such provisions in the law which gives power to Air India to do so. We will draw attention of AI management to this. If they do not drop this idea, we will challenge this in the court," George Abraham, General Secretary of All India Air India Employees Union Guild.

" We can understand offer of voluntary retirements or lay-offs. But sending employees on leave without pay is not acceptable," he warned.

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BJP leaderDr.Syed Zafar Islam are independent directors and members

of Board of Directors which gave power to CMD Bansal to send employees on compulsory leave. Dr. Islam is BJP spokesperson and also a former Managing Director of Deutsche Bank.

Purandeswari is daughter of veteran film icon and politician N.T. Ramarao. She was also Minister of State during UPA government between 2009-14. After this she joined BJP but lost Lok Sabha election in 2014. She has been now accommodated by BJP as an independent director.

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